

**BUSINESS & LABOR**EXHIBIT NO. 1DATE 3-9-11BILL NO. HB 324**AARP Montana**

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March 9, 2011

TO: Members of the Senate Business, Labor, and Economics Affairs Committee
From: Rita Charles, AARP Montana volunteer advocate
Re: Support to HB 324

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the record I am Rita Charles, a volunteer advocate for AARP Montana, an organization with over 155,000 members in this state. AARP Montana supports the improvements to the Montana Comprehensive Health Association contained in HB 324.

For the individuals with pre-existing conditions, the MCHA high risk pool is their only source for health insurance, but for some people it is unaffordable. Increasing eligibility for premium assistance will help many Montanans continue to receive quality healthcare. Also, increasing the number of public board members will help make sure MCHA addresses the needs of consumers.

For the next three years, MCHA will continue to be an important source of health care coverage for individuals with pre-existing conditions. We urge you to support the changes to MCHA in HB 324.